



COVID-19 Guidelines for School Nurses 2022-2023

Purpose: This document is intended to assist school health officials in operating effectively while ensuring safety during ongoing COVID-19. This does not replace local COVID-19 plans or direct engagement with Maine DOE or Maine CDC.

When a student/staff with any [symptoms of COVID-19](#) enters your office, you should:

1. Recommendations for masking in nurses' offices may depend on factors such as COVID-19 Community Level, outbreak status, and patient access.
2. Assess the person, test them with a rapid antigen test if you have a signed permission form, call the parent and send any student/staff member home who is sick. Wash your hands after assessing.
3. If unable to test for COVID-19 at school, recommend that the person be tested as soon as possible and isolate from family members until they receive test results.
4. Have the sick person wear a mask and isolate if possible while in the building, waiting to go home.
5. Report positive results for school-based testing into [RedCap](#).
6. Work with the individual/family to determine when they can leave isolation and return to work/school.

Symptomatic Person with negative test result

If a person tests negative for COVID-19 and is symptomatic, send them home. A home test may be used 48 hours later if symptoms persist. Student/staff should stay home until symptoms are resolving AND they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Isolation Guidelines for a positive test result

When a person tests positive for COVID-19, they must self-isolate at home, regardless of vaccination status.

- Individuals who test positive should go home.
- More information about isolation can be found on the [US CDC site](#).
- Maine CDC does not recommend requiring a negative test to return to school (for staff or students who test positive and have completed 5 days of isolation). The positive individual cannot leave isolation until they meet the [criteria for ending isolation](#).
- Returning to school after isolation, the person should wear a [well-fitting mask](#) for an additional 5 days.

Close Contacts

A school is not required to do contact tracing.

Testing

Maine CDC suggests that schools accept the results of home tests. These tests are not reported in RedCap and will not be investigated by the CDC. For information visit <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/testing>.

COVID-19 within 90 days

If someone has had COVID-19 in the past 90 days, and recovered, they do not need to test unless new symptoms develop. If new symptoms develop, they should isolate immediately, get tested with an antigen test, continue to stay home until they know the results, and wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 full days.

Referrals

[Support services](#) are available for people in COVID-19 isolation and quarantine. [Referral Form](#)

Treatments For treatment options, visit <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/treatment>.

This complete document can be found on the following link: www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19/toolkit



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Purpose: This is a summary of the [operational guidelines](#) issued by the US CDC on May 27th, 2022, updated on October 5th, 2022, for COVID-19 cases among students/staff in school.

1. Staying Up to Date on Vaccinations

- Covid-19 [vaccines](#) are effective at preventing severe disease, hospitalization, and death. Encouraging [vaccination](#) is a public health prevention strategy that helps keep students and staff in school.

2. Staying Home When Sick

3. Ventilation Systems

- Schools and ECE programs can optimize [ventilation](#) and improve indoor air quality to reduce the risk of germs and contaminants spreading through the air.

4. Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- Teach and reinforce proper [handwashing](#) to lower the risk of spreading viruses.
- Provide hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol if washing hands is not possible.

5. Cleaning and Disinfection

- Surfaces should be cleaned at least daily to reduce the risk of germs spread by touching surfaces.

6. Know your COVID-19 Community Levels

- CDC's [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) can serve as COVID-19 prevention strategies to use based on whether communities are classified as low, medium, or high.
- Monitoring local [wastewater data](#) and staff/student vaccination rates.
- When the COVID-19 Community Level indicates an increase, consider additional prevention strategies.

7. Masking

- Wearing a well-fitting mask reduces the [risk of spreading the virus](#) that causes COVID-19. Universal indoor mask use is recommended at a high COVID-19 Community Level.
- Schools with students at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 must make reasonable accommodations when necessary to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities, are able to access in-person learning.
- Policies for use of masks in school nurse offices should follow recommendations outlined in the [Infection Control: Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 \(SARS-CoV-2\)](#) guidance. Recommendations for masking in nurses' offices may depend on factors such as COVID-19 Community Level, outbreak status, and patient access.

8. Testing

- Schools and ECE programs can promote and offer [diagnostic testing](#) for people with symptoms of COVID-19 and recommend a home test for students/staff who may be a close contact of someone with COVID-19. Anyone who tests positive or has symptoms should follow CDC recommendations for [isolation](#) to stay home.

9. Other Considerations

- Close contact sports and indoor sports, band, choir, theater, and other school clubs are particularly risky for participants and spectators, especially in crowded, indoor venues due to increased exhalation. At a high COVID-19 Community Level, schools can consider implementing screening testing for high-risk activities.
- Schools and ECE programs should balance the risk of COVID-19 with educational, social, and mental health outcomes when deciding which prevention strategies to put in place.

This complete document can be found on the following link: www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19/toolkit

Updated 10/18/2022